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NARRATIVE REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 1940

July 1, 1939 - June 30, 1940

August 2, 1940

ARANSAS CAMP BS-1

ARANSAS MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE

Reference is made to recent instructions to submit a brief consolidated narrative report of last years' activities of Aransas Camp BS-1, Austwell, Texas - outlining how the work program has contributed to the development of the Refuge and to our National Defense.

Among the more important projects under way on the Aransas Refuge in the way of permanent improvements the past year was the construction of the Refuge Headquarters buildings; consisting of the Refuge Manager's Residence, Patrolman's Residence, Service Building, Equipment Shed, and the Pumphouse. In connection with the development plan for that area, power lines were laid to each building, a sanitary sewage disposal system was built and the entire area shelled and seeded in accordance with the development plan.

At the Boatman's Headquarters which is located at the Old Gable House site, a distance of approximately 17 miles south of the Refuge Headquarters, a Boatman's Residence, lookout tower, boathouse, and boat channel have been constructed. These facilities will greatly aid in the efficient patrolling of that area and the waters adjacent to that part of the Refuge. These buildings coupled with the connecting truck trails and patrol roads, constructed on the Refuge by the CCC, enable the administrative personnel to efficiently patrol and supervise the control of the Refuge.

Construction has also been made of the road leading from

the railhead at Austwell, Texas to the Aransas Refuge, a distance of nine miles. This road is of shell base construction, well drained, and permits travel to outside communities during long wet spells. The construction of approximately seventeen and one-half miles of truck trails within the Refuge has been completed.

Construction of six cattle guards on the access road and within the refuge the past year has been made. These guards having a concrete base and walls with a steel rail deck; other concrete construction includes the Bergentine Spillway and overflow spillway at Bergentine Dam No. 2.

Construction of the Bergentine Dam No. 2 has been continually in progress during the past year which when completed, will materially aid in the preservation of all our important waterfowl, especially during the winter months.

Approximately seventy-five thousand cubic yards of earth excavation has been moved in the construction of the Bergentine diversion channel the past six months, which upon completion of the channel will flood a large area on the East shore of the Refuge.

Fire breaks approximating sixteen miles of clearings sixty feet in width have been cleared along the most important lines as laid out in the development program. Construction of these fire lanes will greatly minimize the danger of possible fires spreading over a large area of the refuge, causing destruction of wildlife and possible property loss on heavy weeded areas of the refuge.

During the past year about forty enrollees were well-trained in the building trades, with particular emphasis on carpentry and building construction along these lines; approximately twenty-five enrollees were

given training in the mixing and handling of concrete materials on work projects involving the forming and pouring of concrete; about twenty-five enrollees were given practical training in the camp garage as automotive mechanics; and about forty enrollees were trained as skilled truck drivers. Fifteen enrollees had the opportunity to develop as tractor and other heavy equipment operators, while eight were trained in the operation of dragline equipment.

Practically all the remaining enrollees in the camp were trained for some sort of field work such as clearing right-of-ways, construction of telephone lines, clearing of fire lanes, and in the preparation and use of various hand tools.

It is believed that the training of these enrollees in the construction of buildings, roads, concrete construction, lookout towers, fire lanes and telephone lines, and the training of others in the care and operation of various types of equipment and the fact that all of the enrollees have been trained in the practical use of all types of hand tools constitutes a decided factor in the development of the civilian population that will be useful in the time of need or a National Emergency.

Respectfully submitted,

June C. McNeill
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Chief Foreman.